

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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S E C R E T OSLO 1878

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MPOL, NO, NATO

SUBJ: MARINE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE (MAF) AIR BASING REQUIREMENTS IN
NORWAY

REF: (A) STATE 85870, (B) OSLO 1268 (NOTAL), (C) USCINCEUR 220941Z
MAR 76, (D) USCINCEUR 061747Z JAN 76

1. EMBASSY MOST INTERESTED TO READ CINCEUR'S COMMENT ON OUR
TELEGRAM ALERTING WASHINGTON TO PROBLEMS WE PERCEIVE IN HANDLING
MARINE AIR BASING REQUIREMENTS IN NORWAY ON BILATERAL BASIS.
THE PROPOSAL TO CONDUCT NEGOTIATIONS BILATERALLY UNDER THE AEGIS
OF AFNORTH/SACEUR CULMINATING IN COUNTRY TO COUNTRY AGREEMENT
DOES NOT RPT NOT SATISFY CONCERNS WE OUTLINED IN OSLO 1268.

2. WE OF COURSE AGREE WITH THE NEED TO SATISFY MAF AIRBASING
REQUIREMENTS HERE. THE ISSUE IS NOW IT IS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.

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WE BELIEVE THAT THE SUBSTANTIAL POLITICAL RISKS OUTLINED IN

PARA 3 OF OSLO 1268 ARGUE STRONGLY, IF NOT CONCLUSIVELY, IN FAVOR OF SATISFYING SUCH REQUIREMENTS THROUGH NATO CHANNELS IN A LOW-KEY, QUIET FASHION.

3. TWO ADDITIONAL FACTORS INCREASE THE DELICACY OF THE ISSUE:

(A) THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF AN ELECTION YEAR AND POLITICAL ACTIVISTS, AS WELL AS POLITICIANS OF ALL POLITICAL COLORATIONS, WILL BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR ISSUES SUCH AS THIS ONE WHICH COULD BE EXPLOITED TO THE DETRIMENT OF OVER-ALL U.S. INTERESTS.

(B) THE HIGH-LEVEL DEFENSE REVIEW COMMISSION IS IN THE PROCESS OF PREPARING ITS RECOMMENDATIONS TO NORWEGIAN PARLIAMENT, RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH WILL ESTABLISH THE MAIN LINES OF NORWEGIAN SECURITY POLICY THROUGH THE 1980S. ANY SERIOUS POLITICAL DEBATE, PUBLIC OR INTERNAL, COULD HAVE A DELETERIOUS AFFECT ON THE DELIBERATIONS OF THE DEFENSE REVIEW COMMISSION WITH A RESULTANT ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE OVER-ALL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. AND NORWAY IN THE VITAL SECURITY FIELD.

4. U.S.- NORWEGIAN COLLOCATED OPERATING BASE (COB) AGREEMENT WAS NOT CONDUCTED UNDER AEGIS OF AFNORTH AS STATED IN REF C, THOUGH U.S. AFNORTH AIR DEPUTY WAS PRESENT AT NEGOTIATIONS AS NON-PARTICIPATING OBSERVER. FURTHERMORE, NO ESTABLISHED PROCEDURE EXISTS HERE FOR FOLLOW-ON NEGOTIATIONS OF MAF AIR-BASING REQUIREMENTS AS A RESULT OF OUR COB AGREEMENT. A USAFE/EMBASSY DRAFT WAS AGREED UPON, AN AD HOC NEGOTIATING SESSION ARRANGED FOR THE USAFE/EMBASSY TEAM AND, ON THE BASIS OF THAT DRAFT, AGREEMENT WAS REACHED IN A SINGLE ONE AND ONE-HALF HOUR SESSION. THIS HARDLY CONSTITUTES AN ESTABLISHED PROCEDURE OR PRECEDENT.

5. WHEN SPEAKING OF SACLANC ASSETS AND NATO FORCES OPERATING UNDER ALLIANCE CONTINGENCY PLANS, WE FAIL TO SEE WHY BILATERAL APPROACH LEADING TO U.S./NORWEGIAN AGREEMENT OR MOU IS REQUIRED, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF OUR VIEWS ON POLITICAL SENSITIVITY OF ISSUE. THE ALLIANCE MUST BE CAPABLE OF PLANNING

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AND IMPLEMENTING REINFORCEMENT OF THE NORTHERN FLANK WITHOUT ADDITIONAL BILATERAL AGREEMENTS FOR THE RECEPTION OF ALLIED FORCES. COULD NOT THE MARINE AIRBASING REQUIREMENTS BE FULLY ACCOMMODATED IN THE NORMAL NATO CONTINGENCY PLANNING CYCLE? WE OBSERVE THAT USMC HAS MAINTAINED IN PAST ON GROUNDS OF OPERATIONAL DOCTRINE THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE PRE-STOCKAGE REQUIREMENTS.

6. ON THE QUESTION OF HOW TO FUND IMPROVEMENT OF FACILITIES
IF REQUIRED AND THE ARGUMENT THAT THIS KIND OF PROBLEM IS
PRECISELY WHAT THE NATO INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO
COPE WITH.

7. WE HAVE NO OBJECTION TO INFORMAL, PRELIMINARY, MILITARY-
TO-MILITARY DISCUSSIONS ON THIS ISSUE WITH NORWEGIANS,
ALTHOUGH WE SUSPECT NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT WILL SHARE OUR
CONCERNS EXPRESSED PARA 3 ON BILATERAL APPROACH. WE DO
OBJECT TO THESE DISCUSSIONS RAISING ISSUE OF BILATERAL
AGREEMENT UNTIL FINAL DECISION BY USG HAS BEEN REACHED.
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